

GEORGE III.—We have a blind story here of somebody attempting to assassinate your King. No man on earth has my prayers for his continuance in life more sincerely than he. He is truly the American Messiah, the most precious life that ever God gave. And may God continue it. Twenty long years has he been laboring to drive us to our good and he labors and will labor still for it if he can be spared. We shall have need of him for twenty more. The Prince of Wales on the throne, Landsdown and Fox in the Ministry and we are undone! We become chained by our habits to the tails of those who hate and despise us. I repeat it then that my anxieties are all alive for the health and long life of the King. He has not a friend on earth who would lament his loss as much and so long as I should. (Written to Mrs. John Adams from Paris, 1786. F. IV., 262.)

GOOD HUMOR.—Without that bright fancy which captivates, I am in hopes he possesses sound judgment and much observation; and, what I value more than all things, good humor. For thus I estimate the qualities of the mind: 1, good humor; 2, integrity; 3, industry; 4, science. The preference of the first to the second quality may not at first be acquiesced in; but certainly we had all rather associate with a good-humored, light-principled man, than with an ill-tempered rigorist in morality. (To Dr. Rush, 1808. C. V., 226.)

GOVERNMENT.—The opinions of men are not the object of civil government. To suffer the civil magistrate to intrude his powers into the field of opinion and to restrain the profession or propagation of principles on supposition of their ill tendency is a dangerous fallacy, which at once destroys all religious liberty, because he being of course judge of that tendency will make his opinions the rule of judgment, and approve or condemn the sentiments of others only as they shall square with or differ from his own. It is time enough for the rightful purposes of civil government for its officers to interfere when principles break out into overt acts against peace and good order. (From a bill for establishing religious freedom, 1779. F. II., 239.)

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